UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY
BERKELEY

Room 3000, Life Sciences Building, Decemeber 23, 19

Dear Dr. Munz.--

If you will take down volume one of your Index Kewensis you will find on the title page names representative of three families of men. I had touch with all of them. Francis Darwin, son of Charles Darwin, was a personal friend. I knew Sir Joseph Hooker and was once his guest at his home in Sunningdale, Berkshire, on a week end. For several decades I knew Daydon Jackson well. Life-long friends, too, are some of the younger men who have worked on the Index Kewensis. So aside from the dictionary value of the work, a sentimental interest in it grew up in me. So I thought I should like to have a handsome copy of the work. It was taken into account that the Jones copy might be abused or poorly bound, but I was happily prepared to spend all that was necessary in binding in order to make a good-looking set. So,I was unprepared to find that no amount of money would suffice for that rehabilitation which was in my mind. Thus it did not seem out of the way to inquire if the book might be returned.

The matter of price did not enter especially. It is true that I am not a millionaire. Nevertheless, in spite of certain expensive habits in book-buying and in publishing journals, always in my life there has been more money than needed for immediate wants. The Index Kewensis is seldom sold to individuals, but only to libraries and one sees it offered in dealers' catalogues rarely in a lifetime. So I had, doubtless, the idea that, since it was priced so low, more than one person would be disappointed in not getting it, and that a transfer from me would be easy.

One's primary interset in a scientific book is to be sure one of use and one copy does as well as another. Yet one may have a booklover's interest in a book in addition. There are a number of books in my library that once belonged to men having great names in the history of botany.

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When students see the autographs of these great botanist on the fly-leaves of my books they are often stirred and thrilled by the experience. It is a sentiment not to be despised. You are an entirely reasonable man and it could not be that you would object to the motive which caused my request. as to the Index Kewensis. If you had said that in closing an estate it was not possible to permit the return of a purchase, that would have been quite all right with me. All this is so obvious that I am sure this item of the Index did not enter in the writing of your letter of December 15. That is "out" as an explanation.

As to the Tyler pamphlet it is not of the slighest consequence to me. If I had had your letter at the time that mine was written of course I would not have mentioned it. It was mentioned only as a routine matter, just as I would mention to a bookseller that a certain title had not come. So, again, this matter could not have caused your letter and it also is"out".

The remaining items were better than I expected as coming from Jones. One of them, a great rarity, is soiled nad mutilated , but that does not trouble me at all. My intimates know that I have a lust for turning up some unsuspected rarity in a bookshop, broken and decrepit and hopeless, and by the aid of the arts making out of it something to stand handsomely on my shelves. When the cleaner, repairer and binder have done their work on this particular pamphlet no one will suspect it as ever coming out of Jones' cottage. There is a certain triumph in doing things like that. Since the items of this lot were not mentioned in my letter, they could not have influenced the writing of your letter. They are'out'.

Therefore there is something that I have overlooked, misjudged or forgotten, because there is a vein of anger running through your letter. None of the statements, motives, feelings or purposes attributed to me do

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I share or hold. Perspective is a truly wonderful thing, and a little time to secure that will doubtless enable me to write you a letter to your satisfaction and, I should hope, contentment.

Two persons who basked in the favor of M. E. Jones and gushed (the word is none too strong) interminably over him are women, both botanists of considerable capacity. But, since I reflect further upon it, I see that both are temperamentally disqualified for preparing a Jones' itinerary and neither have the necessary historical background. I felt an impulse to come to Claremont and do a Jones itinerary myself. No other botanist has ever traveled for so long a period of years and so continuously and so widely in western America as Jones. His personality and antagonisms need have nothing to do with the itinerary, and there would be on the side, in such an historical survey of the western land, treasure trove uncovered many many times the value of the itinerary. However, I would not have the slightest interest in doing it if any one else were at it or desired to do it.

I wish you a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

W. L. Jepson

W. L. Jepson.